THE COMMONWEAL

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HOLLYWOOD WINS A TRUCE

THE WAR against the evil motion picture has not been won simply because the alarmed muck merchants have promised to reform. That promise has been made before. It has been broken each time it has been made. Perhaps it will be kept this time; perhaps—But it is certain that the promise this time will not be relied upon, and that instead of halting the Legion of Decency the Catholic bishops will continue to swell its ranks by many millions. Last week, for example, the vast Archdiocese of New York was instructed by Cardinal Hayes to prepare for the enrolment early in October of its contingent. Already, more than fifty dioceses have taken action, and while exact figures are as yet unavailable, it is credibly estimated that 2,000,000 Catholics have been enrolled among those who have pledged themselves to abstain from patronizing objectionable films. Nor are the Protestant and Jewish leaders and organizations who are uniting with the Catholics willing to let themselves be fooled again. Unchecked by the latest gesture from the Will Hays organization, they are organizing their forces for a fight to a finish.

What the industry has promised, however, will be given a fair test. The plan proposed is, briefly, as follows: The Hollywood office of the Hays organization has obtained from the organized heads of the film industry power which is vested in one man—Joseph I. Breen, a Catholic—to reject in whole or in part any picture which violates the code of moral standards long ago adopted by the industry, but hitherto more honored in the breach. If adhered to, this code sufficiently protects the public against the worst evils which have provoked the present war upon the evils of the films. If any producer refuses to accept the verdict of the Hays official, he can no longer, as in the past, carry his case to a jury of three fellow producers in Hollywood, but must take it to the Board of Directors of the organized film industry in New York. This will place final responsibility where it belongs. And if that responsibility is again abused, the press, the public, and the leaders of the Legion of Decency will know the facts, and can act in accordance with them.

The Committee of Bishops representing, under the chairmanship of Archbishop McNicholas of

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Cincinnati, the hierarchy of the United States, received this plan, and accepted it, for they are entirely willing to have the picture industry clean its own house. But the Committee made clear its immovable determination to continue the Legion of Decency and extend it to every town and village of the country where Catholics live. Therefore a national committee of priests was appointed to coordinate the movement, and to maintain and increase its fervor, and its practical action.

It would require pages of our space merely to record the more significant details of the action that already has taken place, but that task is being adequately done by the religious newspapers, and, lately—since it awakened to what is going on—by the secular press as well.

What impressed the secular press was the organized and highly practical character of the movement. For many years it had watched the vain bombardment of Hollywood by merely verbal weapons—resolutions, and protests, and articles and letters innumerable in the religious press—and had become accustomed to the ineffectiveness of such a procedure. But when the Legion of Decency was formed, and when in at least two great cities a total boycott of the motion picture was imposed by Catholic authority, and when the Catholic attack was warmly joined by others, the secular press recognized that the moral forces of the land mean business, and are competent to transact it. If the motion picture industry fulfills its latest promise, well and good; but if it does not, the Legion of Decency, recruited to many millions, will advance again.

Nor will that army limit its attack solely to the fortress of filth which is Hollywood. Most Catholics sincerely hope that sweeping and drastic censorship laws may not be the outcome of the whole movement—a censorship bound to include the stage and portions of the publishing industry, as well as the films, once it is launched—but censorship is certain if the industries concerned will not, or cannot, take their last chance to restrain themselves. To think they can really reform themselves is credulous optimism, quite unwarranted by facts; but it does seem reasonable to expect that fear of worse things may force them to live up to their own proposal to behave with at least outward decency. It is a truce that has been granted Hollywood—not yet a treaty of peace.

In New York, in addition to the movement dealing with the films, a special committee formed by leading representatives of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths has decided to work upon a plan for effective cooperation to handle problems affecting theatres, dance halls and indecent magazines. This, too, is intended to be a permanent organization. The Greater New York Federation of Churches and several important Jewish synagogues are allied with the Catholic Church in this group. While strongly endorsing and supporting the Legion of Decency in the specific question of undesirable films, the new alliance will study other problems requiring solution. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is also to follow up its expressed determination to organize nationally the Protestant forces which are swinging into action.

Attendance at motion picture theatres since May 1 has already fallen off 12 percent from 1933 figures, according to a report made by the *Motion Picture Herald*. Ignoring many demands that he should resign his post, Mr. Will Hays is now in Hollywood, putting his new plan into operation. The Legion of Decency goes on recruiting its ranks, and extending its plans, and if the Hays organization once more fails to keep a solemn pledge, what has occurred up to this time will be regarded as a mere preliminary skirmish when the real war begins.

WEEK BY WEEK

THERE is no word other than "stunned" to describe the German reaction to all that the recent upheaval brought to light. We have been given no official interpretation of the killings seemingly authorized by Hitler and Goering; and the tenor of the press dispatches is too vague and nebulous to permit anything better than a guess concerning the forces which clashed on June 30. Nevertheless there emerges one possibility—the likelihood that the "second revolution," as the rabid Nazis had termed their projected clean-up of the "bourgeois," really broke out, and that well-nigh simultaneously the police crushed the uprising. We may suppose that revolutionists actually slew some of their old enemies, for example, General von Schleicher, the aides and friends of Franz von Papen, and Herr von Kahr. Certain further attacks on Jews may likewise be accounted for on this basis. Then we may proceed to assume that Hitler struck quickly, almost without thinking, against the leaders of the revolt. In twenty-four hours, therefore, the Nazi party may have witnessed both a mutiny and its suppression. All this is merely a theory, but it is the only one which even remotely begins to account for the phenomena. The belief that Hitler suddenly ran amuck and ordered a holocaust requires far more credulousness than we are able to muster. Incidentally the charge that a "foreign power" was involved—a charge for which Herr Hess was forced to apologize in affecting terms—may have originated in a clumsy endeavor by Goering to cover up a serious party explosion.

Germany Waits

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NONE of the murders met with more universal condemnation than did that of Dr. Erich Klausener, director of Catholic Action in Prussia. News dispatches from the Vatican assert that the Holy See was profoundly shocked by the event, and wholly certain that the victim was not a suicide. Klausener had many years of public service to his credit and was, though affiliated with the Center party, not a "politician" in the usual sense of the term. Under a number of Prussian governments he had ranked next to the Minister of the Interior and had been entrusted with the command of the police. It may well have been that as a result of Nazi activities between 1928-1933 Klausener had incurred the hatred of some Hitler supporter, who waited until the hour to take revenge had struck. Certainly there was no other conceivable motive. He had been appointed director of Catholic Action by Pope Pius XI some years previous; and in recent addresses he had counseled moderation. The work he had done was so unimpeachable that, although demoted when the Nazis came to power, he was nevertheless retained as an official. Even his record as a German patriot was excellent, including not merely service at the front during the war but also imprisonment by the Belgians during the time of the Ruhr invasion. Here again the deed is incredible unless we assume that the "second revolution" was in part effected and that Dr. Klausener was one of its victims.

OVER most of the week there lay the shadow of a cloudy industrial outlook, conjured up in part by the international situation and the continued serious unsettlement of Germany but caused also by confusion at home. That labor difficulties such as those which led to a bloody finale in San Francisco should figure in the news of the day is not astonishing, but the uncompromising ideology which finds expression at such times appears relatively new and may presage sharper social conflict than has been normal in the United States for a good many years. It is evident that the forces at work are not merely economic—that, as a matter of fact, revolutionary ideologies are slowly making headway. Exceptional interest attaches therefore to the record which will be established by arbitration boards, like the one appointed for San Francisco in conformity with new federal legislation. If these can gain a reputation for moderateness and fairness, the social doctrine of the New Deal will profit immeasurably. Meanwhile the campaign against government control and for "liberty" has been taken up in earnest by spokesmen for the Republican party. Speeches delivered within the past week indicate that the strategy of attack will, for the time being, include any number of quotations from Abraham Lincoln, with the inference that slavery was no worse than "oppression" is today.

The Trend of Events

EVENTS are happening with such rapidity both in the flaring up and the passing away of strikes that it is difficult to attempt to relate general principles to particulars before the particulars have radically altered. It was only a short while ago that a strike of colossal proportions threatened in the automobile manufacturing industry, another in the textile industry and another in the steel industry. We can say with what we believe is justifiable fervor, "Thank God they were averted." We say this not only as members of the general public who would have suffered in our pocketbooks ultimately if the strikes had been carried out, but also as human beings who cannot but be unhappy at the sight of warfare which bears most heavily on the combatants and their families. The war-mongers in our own country most to be feared, most likely to be inhumanly selfish, are the class-war-mongers. Often these may be merely ignorant fellows deluding themselves with the idea that they are urging a necessary evil for the attainment of an ultimate good; again they may be dangerously emotional near-imbeciles to whom the excitement of pulling off a big stunt like a big strike overshadows any less immediate gains or losses.

Labor War or Peace

IN EACH case the strikes referred to were averted by pacific means involving a fact-finding, supposedly impartial board for the settlement of disputed issues. These issues are highly involved, controversial and far more likely to be settled with the greatest good to the greatest number by an appeal to reason and fair play rather than by the resort to force. Even the vexed question of the closed shop, we believe, is not one whose answer necessarily divides the sheep of the just from the goats of predatory capitalists. In particular cases the closed shop can be abused by demagogues or other types of astute politicians, who under the guise of leading the workingmen they represent toward bettering their conditions, do them livelong injury. The ambiguity of Section 7a of the NRA labor code can be defended as being not a mere straddle but a logical facing of a situation which only the naif would say could be settled in a phrase definitely and finally one way or the other. So we believe public sentiment is agreed on one general principle at present, and that is that both sides in labor troubles should try to settle their differences through the peaceable means which are at their disposal. And American public sentiment will make itself felt peacefully but firmly against any group that will not at least give such a settlement a try.

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Nature and Man

AN ODD and grewsome bit of gossip from Mexico relates that a newly born child astounded those present by offering, in diction of great refinement, a choice between earthquakes and storms for the next six months. Thereupon, having received an answer, it triumphantly died. We suppose this is anything else but an addition to genuine history. But it suggests anew the old query concerning the relation between human fate and the cosmos. Viewing with some alarm the madnesses prevalent in the human race, one is driven to wonder whether "nature" may not have something to do with them. Certainly the weather has been extraordinary, a well-nigh universal drought following close on a winter of exceptional rigor in many parts of the world. These climactic conditions may be only feeble signs of more profound disturbances in the wide realms of energy. It would take too long to review the beliefs, prevalent in so many philosophies and reflected even in the astrological passages of Saint Thomas, regarding the intimate relation between the universe and man. Virtually all Platonism has assumed the existence, under the veil of matter, of forces which are akin to the mind; and if it is probable that corespondence between human souls dwelling in collectivity is far more immediate than a sensory view of life would indicate, then men can be influenced by what happens to them, physically speaking, in the mass as well as by what experiences greet them as individuals. At least it would really be comforting to shift part of the blame for insanities now in evidence upon Mother Nature. And after all she wouldn't mind.

Modesty of Mystery Writers

THE ANIMADVERSIONS recently published by the mystery writer, Mr. Rufus King, upon his creation, the super-detective Lieutenant Valcour, invite speculation at large upon this topic. As lesser things may be compared to greater —which is not to deny that Mr. King can construct as tasty and competent a mystery as one will find today—so does his contemptuous reference to Valcour as a "stuffed shirt" whom he dislikes, and means to kill off, call to mind how some of the giants felt about their work. The self-critics are few, one must admit. Jane Austen's comment matched Mr. King's in candor, but she was on the other side of the fence, when she said of Elizabeth Bennett (and who shall blame her?), "Delightful creature!" Tennyson's implicit but powerful tribute to "Maud" is contained in the circumstance that he never read the poem aloud without the tears rolling down his cheeks. And there is, of course, Shakespeare's assurance to his lady, not disqualified, we think, by being incorporated in his work, since he so patently meant it: "Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his shade, when in eternal lines to time thou growest." Milton spoke ahead of time his conviction that he would produce something the world would not "willingly let die"; and neither the quality of the production nor the quality of Milton's own mind lends color to the fancy that he might later have thought himself mistaken. In our own time, perhaps the nearest approach to Mr. King's objective ruthlessness comes from Arnold Bennett. Though no shrinking violet, he admitted that many of his novels were written at the highest possible speed, and for money only. Perhaps there is something deflationary about the writing of detective novels. And if there is, we wish Mr. Van Dyne would tell us what he really and truly thinks of Philo Vance.

Perhaps It's the Spinach

THE DISTINGUISHED anthropologist, Dr. Franz Boas, has just proclaimed his explanation of the marked increase in the stature of civilized man over the last three-quarters of a century. He believes that the European's two, and the American's two and a half to three, additional inches are due to the conquest of many of the diseases which affect young children. The fact itself of course is beyond dispute. Western man—and especially Western woman—is now more considerable in every dimension than formerly. Most of the medieval armor in the Metropolitan Museum would be a tight fit for the typical halfback; while the approximation, in spite of sporadic dieting fads, of more and more modern women to the heroic amplitude of the Venus de Milo is a matter of statistics. A famous Eastern women's college gives prominent place on its walls to a graph showing the increase through several generations of its average undergraduate's height, weight and general measurements. It lends the chill confirmation of science to those nostalgic descriptions uttered by the more ancient die-hards of sentiment, of the vanished sylphs of another day. The number four glove, the number two shoe, the sixteen-inch waist, really did exist, and really are gone. But can all this be ascribed to only one factor—however indisputable, however beneficent? Is there not rather an additional clue suggested by the name of the Venus de Milo? If the body culture of the ancient Greeks made them a large race, may not the exercises and sports which have spread universally among us have helped to make us large also? And finally, there is a third vital factor, a discovery dating back to perhaps a quarter of a century: correct feeding. Many of the adults of today benefited from childhood by the expanding science of calciums and vitamines. It is our guess that that has had a good deal to do with the extra inches.

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THE MOVIES AND HISTORY

By JAMES J. WALSH

WHAT has usually been advanced as the most telling argument in favor of the movies is that which concerns their use for educational purposes. Phases of history and of science may be presented on the film with an appeal to the two senses, sight and hearing, that can scarcely fail to produce a deep impression on youthful minds. Indeed it is often said that this is one of the most valuable educational methods that we have. Almost needless to say, however, this educational value may very easily be made more than a minus quantity in the wrong direction, when the material presented departs from the truth of either history or science in any serious way. We have a striking example of this before us at the present time. The movies have been very naturally affected by the epidemic of biography writing that has broken out so virulently in recent years. Numbers of historical characters have been presented on the screen in such a way that the rising generation is securing its first deep impression of biography and the background for historical perspective by this very facile method.

It is characteristic of the movies that the persons whose biographies are chosen for filming are usually those whose lives are not edifying to say the least, but even with regard to these as a rule the worst side of their lives is emphatically presented. Shakespeare's apothegm that "the evil men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones," would represent a strikingly truthful motto for biography as presented in the film. It is assumed that youth is ever so much more interested in evil than in good and that tendency is catered to very definitely by the movies. Someone said not long since that the best briefest definition of news is sin. Youth, like the Athenians, is ever seeking for news and novelties.

Under the circumstances, however, young folks are almost sure to get the impression that the only people worth while knowing anything about are those in whose lives evil transcended good to a very great degree, and are likely to acquire the accessory impression that goodness is a very drab affair at best and occurs in a monotonous existence without any thrill or excitement in it so that life is scarcely worth while. As to the truth of history thus secured, the less said the better.

An excellent illustration of this is to be found in the picture that is supposed to give a biographic sketch of Queen Christina of Sweden. This film was recently shown in New York. The biography of the Swedish Queen as presented was about as much of a caricature of her real biography as it could possibly be.

Christina was the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, the famous commander of armies who wrought so much harm to Europe but gained great prestige for his own country hitherto so obscure. His leadership more than any other factor helped prolong the Thirty Years War. When he fell at the battle of Luetzen, Christina was only six, and as her mother, Maria of Brandenburg, was known to be pleasure loving, the Council of State, fearing unfavorable maternal influence, entrusted her care to her Aunt Catherine, to whom indeed her father, distrusting his wife, had previously confided her when he sailed away for Germany.

Unfortunately her Aunt Catherine lived only a few years to carry out the commission which had been imposed on her, and Christina was put under the care of the devoted sister of the great Chancellor of Sweden, Axel Oxenstiern. With a father of the vivid vitality of Gustavus Adolphus, and a mother who could not well be trusted even with the bringing up of her own daughter, it is easy to understand that Christina might be expected to have some tendencies to irregularities of life.

In her early years she was given an excellent education and she proved to have talents of a high order and a taste for good literature, so that she came to be looked upon as a brilliant scholar. As recreation in the midst of her studies she took to manly sports and especially to horseback riding, and could outride most men. Her favorite amusement was bear hunting; she was utterly fearless and quite ignored danger in the midst of her preoccupation with the sport.

At the age of eighteen she became the Queen of Sweden and at once began to make use of her intellectual talents to diffuse culture among her people. She collected books and objects of art of various kinds and summoned some of the most distinguished thinkers of Europe to her court, in order personally to secure the advantage of their knowledge, but also in the hope of improving the intellectual life of her people. Among those who accepted her invitation were Descartes, the French philosopher, whose approach to what he deemed a newer foundation for philosophy then attracted wide attention, and the great Dutch jurist, Hugo Grotius, who accomplished much in laying the foundations of international law.

Poor Descartes very soon found that it was no easy job to teach philosophy to one so earnest in the pursuit of knowledge and pleasure and yet at the same time so devoted to her duties as a sovereign, as was Christina. It was far colder in Sweden than in France, and the only time the

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Queen could give him for their study of philosophy was five o'clock in the morning. Poor Descartes, for some years rather delicate in health, did not last long in a teaching régime that had such unseasonable hours. He went to Sweden in October, 1649, and died in February, 1650.

The Swedish people, whose ambitions to occupy an important place in Europe had been aroused by the victories of Gustavus Adolphus, wanted their Queen to marry and provide an heir for the throne who would restore Sweden's martial glories. Christina was not willing to give up her independence and was ever so much more interested in her art collections and her library for the cultivation of her people than in warlike glory. For nearly twenty-five years the Thirty Years War had been waged in Europe, bringing civilization into a serious state and laying waste to a very great extent the whole north of Europe. Christina dreamed of peace rather than war, and it was through her more than anyone else that the Thirty Years War was brought to an end by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. This did not add to her popularity among her people, for "the sons of Vikings and Berserks cared little for a queen of pen and ink or a parchment in petticoats."

As soon as the war was at an end Christina was enabled to use her revenues more freely for the purchase of books and she so drained Italy of its literary treasure that, as Ranke said in his "History of the Popes": "The Italians complained that ships laden with the spoils of their libraries and all the appliances of learning were being carried away to the Arctic region."

So much did her studies interest her that she finally resolved she would rather be a queen in the realm of scholarship than laden with the cares and responsibilities of a ruler of men. Her studies had brought her ever closer to the Catholic Church, and contact with a group of members of the Society of Jesus removed her last doubts as to her faith. She could not be satisfied with the Lutheranism accepted in Sweden and felt she could not continue to reign in Sweden as a convert to Catholicity. So she resigned her throne in favor of her cousin, Charles Gustavus.

After her resignation she went to Brussels where she made a private confession of her belief in Catholicism, and she was formally received into the Church at Innsbruck in 1655. From Innsbruck she went to Rome to be confirmed by the Pope. She brought her books with her; they filled a series of wagons which followed the coach in which she rode.

In Rome, where she spent most of the rest of her life, her palace became a place of assemblage for artists and sculptors and she became a liberal patron of the arts. Not only did she provide substantial aid for struggling artists but was generous in the prices she paid for their work. Her library and art collection were magnificent. And in the midst of her interest in esthetics she did not neglect charity. Indeed, she spent so much time and money in the care of the poor that she came to be hailed as a mother among them. The tradition at Rome is that she became more and more pious and exacting in the fulfilment of her religious duties and that death had no terrors for her. She asked to be buried very simply but the Pope had her body embalmed and brought to St. Peter's where it is entombed.

Her library made a very substantial addition to the Vatican collection and its accession stimulated the gathering of books so that the Vatican Library became one of the best collections in the world.

None of all this appears on the screen when the picture of Christina is presented and she is depicted as pleasure loving and selfishly preoccupied with her own interests. Christina had her faults. How could the daughter of Gustavus have been otherwise? Her faults were not as great as her own people were only too ready to think once they heard of her having become a convert to the Catholic Church. That was the greatest fault that she had committed in the eyes of a great many of the devoted Lutherans among her countrymen. They were perfectly sure that anyone who would do that would surely be capable of almost anything else.

Christina's intense devotion to scholarship and her desire to improve her people by inviting to her court the greatest scholars of the time are the index of her character. In her case it would be well indeed that the good should not be interred with her and only the evil, such as it was, allowed to remain. And yet that is the mode of history introduced to movie audiences all over the country when this film was produced.

This is only an example of what is being done in creating entirely false backgrounds in the minds of the rising generation with regard to important people and phases of history.

Sonnet of Isolation

How effortless across the summer night
The crystal conversation of the stars
Swirls in a rain of syllables so bright,
So swift, so silent that space has no bars
To prison them as through the centuries
Of human loneliness a void has hung
Between all loves who'd flash their secrecies
Of soul to soul. Nor has a bridge been flung
Safely across from crag of mind to mind.
Swing out the girders of philosophy,
Fix them with golden spikes of song or bind
The arches with the iron of poetry,
Yet, if you dare to cross, they spring apart,
So wide the chasm between heart and heart!

AUGUSTUS CLARE.

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THE CASE FOR DECENTRALIZATION

By JOHN MARION EGAN

Last week Mr. Egan discussed the trend to centralization, holding that Congress was being steadily urged to strip the commonwealths of their constitutional privileges and averring that the Supreme Court has been too subservient to Congress. The present paper analyzes some recent legislation, particularly such bills as have grown out of the need for relief, and holds that existing methods for administering the public works funds are "officious." Mr. Egan also believes that decentralization is theoretically undesirable.—The Editors.

AS THE overwhelming repudiation of ultra-conservatism and the Eighteenth Amendment in the 1932 election brought into Congress nearly all who were popularly supposed to be most liberal, one would presume that there would be a reaction against the nationalistic tendencies, and that the Jeffersonian protections to true liberalism would be strengthened, but it now appears that many of these supposed liberals are also giving more consideration to the powerful nationalistic influences, both selfish and misguided, than to the future of liberalism.

On account of urgent necessity for providing immediate relief to suffering unemployed, decreased revenues due largely to federal encroachment upon local sources of revenue, and pressure from harassed taxpayers, the local governments have watched their highways, parks, public utilities and public buildings go to ruin from neglect and become overcrowded, obsolete, or worn out, while they supported able-bodied men in idleness, without the ability to provide the materials required for the use of their services upon the badly needed public works, and they have added fuel to the depression conflagration by dismissing public employees. The local governments were not only prepared to commence these pressing public works projects immediately, as contrasted with the months, if not years, that are required to commence new federal projects, but nearly every community, in the normal times previous to 1929, had also thoroughly discussed and investigated and in many cases carefully planned for the future, numerous public works, which also could have been commenced with little or no delay.

It would, therefore, be supposed that the true liberal in Congress would support wholeheartedly the President's policy of retrenchment in federal routine expenses and also advocate economy in other federal expenditures in order to throw the full weight of the federal financial power to the aid of the local governments and halt its encroachment upon their sources of revenue. While Roosevelt held the full power of the loss of federal patronage over their heads by withholding appointments, the self-styled liberals reluctantly consented to the federal retrenchments in routine expenses and even repulsed the powerful raid of the well-organized and well-financed veterans' lobby. But then instead of providing immediate aid to the local governments (so they could use their unemployed upon their badly needed public works) and later providing federal projects, if necessary, to employ the surplus which could not be absorbed by them (though reasonably financed by the federal government), right of way was first given to an immense, visionary federal project benefiting little except a small, sparsely populated part of the nation, the professional boomers, and real estate speculators.

Authority was then provided for the establishment of the important NRA organization, but instead of limiting its scope to cooperative purposes, with self-imposed codes of fair competition and self-imposed minimum wages and limitations upon hours of employment, all enforceable only by means of the constitutional penalties of boycott, removal of the blue eagle, and publicity, the act attempted to vest the President with unlimited authority to prescribe all conditions of employment and to require a license to conduct any business enterprise, which would be subject to rescission upon violation of any of the conditions, and specified penalties for operating without a license or violating any of the codes or conditions of employment. Full exercise of the authority would have resulted in as direct a supervision of our daily lives as any of the dictatorships of Europe. With the exception, however, of the attempt to regulate the production of oil, the President has invoked the unconstitutional clauses of the act only to a minor extent, and the fact that they were passed in an emergency which will probably have largely passed or be met otherwise in a constitutional manner before the Supreme Court will be compelled to pass upon their constitutionality, will make the results less serious than the fifty-fifty appropriation measures, unless the Supreme Court weakens under the congressional pressure and declares them valid on grounds which will permit Congress to extend its usurpation of state functions.

These projects, the C.W.A., P.W.A., H.O.L.C., R.F.C., A.A.A. and other organizations, required enormous expenditures, which have compelled Congress to take large additional slices out of the sources of revenue of the state

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and local governments, and with the President's patronage whip dispensed, Congress has again surrendered to the demands of the veterans' lobby and bureaucrats, diverted the payroll of the C.W.A. to increase the healthy salaries of the congressmen's bureaucratic protegés, and made further slices necessary out of the revenues of the state and local governments by paying the biennial vote bribe to the Veterans.

The 1933 session of Congress, however, eventually found time between hearings of lobbyists of the bureaucrats, N.E.A. (properly Nationalized Education Association), Veterans and other selfish interests, to throw a sop to the local governments; and at President Roosevelt's request, direct grants to them were authorized. But the Hamiltonians as usual got in their joker. Instead of allotting the funds between the state and local governments in proportion to population, number of unemployed, a combination of both, or other measure of unemployment needs, so they could commence work immediately upon their badly needed public works, Congress provided for the appointment of a federal Santa Claus and the usual army of subordinate Santa Clauses, who were to dole out the funds at their discretion, if and when they became fully satisfied that the proposed projects, in their Solomonian judgments, were wisely chosen. Of course, any suggestions from the congressmen were to be emphatically disregarded. Although political considerations appear, in fact, to have had little weight in the administration of these funds (contrary to rule), the appointments were necessarily made in haste with little or no investigation of the appointee's qualifications.

In order to secure the 30-percent direct grant from the federal government, which accompanies a loan, municipalities naturally accept all the federal loans they can obtain. A gigantic contest has, therefore, arisen to see which municipalities can produce the most ingenious methods of spending money, and which can exert the most pressure upon the administrators to assist them to see the social desirability of their particular projects. With the unlimited considerations they must weigh, the haste with which they must act, and their limited qualifications to make a decision, the projects chosen have frequently not been the ones which a calm judgment and knowledge of local conditions, needs and desires of the population would prefer.

It would appear, however, in these cases, as in the case of the fifty-fifty grants to the states, that a rejection of any project by the federal administrators would entitle the disappointed municipality to a mandamus, if based solely upon their opinion of the social or economic desirability of the project or even upon engineering, personnel, or administrative objections, particularly if the objection does not apply to more than 70 percent of the expenditure.

Finally, the greatest objection to the present officious method of administering the public works funds is the great delay in providing employment entailed by attempts to gather and sift the unlimited considerations that should be weighed in passing any adequate judgment upon the merits of applications.

It has been seen that on the basis of reason, true liberalism in government must necessarily support the Jeffersonian principle of decentralization, and that the recent history of congressional legislation shows that constitutional decentralization cannot be maintained without a strong, independent Supreme Court to hold the national legislature within its constitutional bounds. The history of the present unprecedented international problem of unemployment, instead of proving that such constitutional bounds are undesirable on account of hampering national action, has proven that such bounds are of inestimable value, not only to restrain the patronage-seeking national legislature from meddling in matters which can be handled more satisfactorily by the local governments and avoid strait-jacket restraints upon individuality and progress, but also to protect democracies from the usurpations of fanatical minorities, civil wars, and merciless oppression of other minorities during such periods.

Antique Carved Figures in 57th Street

I do not know what
dance:
the swirled

ribbons and the scarves of marble,
the spent, upraised carved hands
curved to say "Birds

upsprung and flying";
heads
bent, as ones' who say:

"This way
the flowers
went."

I do not know what
dance. What step
follows?

(What follows this leaf
drift and this
grief?)

"Dancers: what step
follows
for lead feet?"

RAYMOND LARSSON.

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THE CRUSADING GENERATION

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

MR. VAN WYCK BROOKS has just republished, in one volume, three short books which years ago kept the eyes of everyone who thought himself "an intelligent young man" glued to the page ("Three Essays on America." Dutton. $3.00). Such a dish of old fare is a challenge to both host and guest, but I think neither will have anything to regret. These essays keep a remarkable meatiness, flavor and delicacy. Mr. Brooks is of course prompt to say that as a mature person he should not be identified with sundry rash statements characteristic of youth. Then he was prone to attribute "to one's own country the faults of human nature in general." And youth, anxious to rid itself of the control exercised by bearded worthies, was sometimes headstrong enough to throw a bomb no gentleman would have dispatched.

Reading through these papers again, I find myself cautiously revising estimates which seemed as right as Aristotle a decade or so ago. Mr. Brooks, for example, boils down the sap of Emerson, Longfellow, Poe and their peers with so much deftness and dispatch that one is tempted to swallow the syrup without much thought. But every young critic forgets that a lot of straining and restraining ought to precede any work at the kettle. We all used to think we could get Longfellow into a tea-cup. Doubtless one could. But the bouquet, the potential intoxication, the value might have evaporated, leaving behind a messy paste of something neither digestible nor representative. All of us—the pronoun refers to the group which explicitly or otherwise accepted Mr. Brooks as a leader—were not so much critics as crusaders. We were in a terrible hurry to get at a task which then seemed alone worthy of the altruistic (perhaps rather the honest) intelligence in these United States.

Now quite sincerely I still think that the formula which Mr. Brooks found for this task and the motives he associated with it are absolutely unimpeachable. He never came nearer to putting the essence of his remarks into a paragraph than here: "The only fruitful approach is the personal approach, and to me, at least, Thoreau, Emerson, Poe and Hawthorne are possessions forever. This does not alter the fact that if my soul were set to the accumulation of dollars not one of them would have the power to move me from it. And this I take to be a suggestive fact. Not one of them, not all of them, have had the power to move the soul of America from the accumulation of dollars; and when one has said this, one has arrived at some sort of basis for literary criticism." That was the point, the discovery of which thrilled the intellectually conscious members of a whole generation.

First of all, the personality. It was mighty hard to define that. It meant the "soul" and yet it was nothing abstract or anti-social. The "personality" was really that which decided to live, partly through poetry and partly through action, into the concrete world of the time, reforming that according to standards constituted by the wedding of the ethical and the artistic power latent in civilization. There was to be no archeology; but there was to be tradition. And while we were sometimes not as wise about money as Dr. Johnson, it was clear to us all that slavery to wealth-getting was the reason why "personalities" withered in America, justifying that horrible passage in an early Chestertonian essay which said that the voice of the United States was the shrill, sweet cry of a nation on its death-bed. The time was against everything more serious than a Sunday jaunt in the automobile—often perilous, it is true, to life and limb. But the then young intellectualists were as much in earnest as an alarm-clock.

Through the personality, Brooks dreamed of the construction of the American community. He wanted a university where not every professor was tepid; a literary society not all members of which were either best sellers or bitterly disappointed middle-aged husks; and a polity of which the directing minds were affected by something more appropriate than the profit motive. All this was doubtless based on the fallacy of overgreat expectations. But the criticism which preceded it was redeemed by this very hopefulness—this willingness to reckon in terms of possibilities—from all danger of negative complacency.

In short, these essays are immensely valuable in themselves; and aside from details, granted a more positive Christianity than the author professed, they still seem to me a more valuable foundation for a young man's advancement than anything of the kind since written. No doubt they need the complement of More's more aloof and stringent but also more philosophical thinking. Despite all that is from some points of view helpful in Babbitt, I should feel very sorry for a young Catholic who elected to make Babbitt rather than Brooks the patron of his humanism. On the other hand, it would doubtless be easier to choose the Harvard professor. Reading "Three Essays on America" and its author's other publications demands as part of one's equipment something rather unusual and not fool-

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proof—a sense for the trend of cultural history. You can be happier with Babbitt if you ignore the record; and of course the record is an immensely puzzling though rich and important thing.

Part of the record is the fascinating story of the generation to which Brooks belonged. With it there came to be, for reasons hard to formulate, a real "youth movement" the vitality of which was so great that it still lives in the ideology—or part of the ideology—underlying the New Deal. Mr. Wilson reduced to terms of Addisonian rhetoric a few of the beliefs which then stirred thousands of young men and women. Poetry took on a new lease of life, so that the few years leading up to war reintroduced verse to American civilization. The university took an immense number of blows on the chin—Columbia's history department was one of the consequences, the revitalization of smaller colleges was another. Real creative zest bubbled up in dozens of places, establishing in a short while the literary schools to which (for example) Sherwood Anderson and Willa Cather belonged. The attack on conventionalism, symbolized by Miss Monroe's teas and Mr. Masters's style, went very deep, sweeping tens of thousands onward to plans for a new social order. Looking back, one has a feeling that those years are now something more than merely part of the past.

But it was the fate of this generation to be swallowed up in the war—a disturbance so utterly on the periphery of things American that the task of correlating it with the American adventure as a whole was doomed in advance. I have always felt that Miss Cather's "One of Ours" is an artistic failure, and especially that nothing more woefully unrealistic has ever been written about warfare. Still, there are some significant intuitions in the book, notably that in which the hero stands for the failure of all youth in his time. Nothing could ever release him from fatality; and nothing came either of the great hopes of his generation. The poetry of one decade vanished in the naturalism, obscenity and bitterness of another. As everywhere else, the old triumphed. Potentially the greatest age of American thought and art became the heyday not of materialism only but of intellectual and social sloth as well.

There has, it is true, been a literature—in some respects an astonishingly virile and attractive literature. The best possible characterization of it, however, is this: it consists of books written by men and women who lost faith. They learned something by very reason of this disaster. To fiction they bequeathed the American's discovery of animalism and routine; on scholarship they bestowed the values of a boundless scepticism and cynicism. It is significant that a Middle Western generation which began with a rather exuberant affection for Abraham Lincoln (vide, for example, Masters and Sandburg) should have ended without heroes of any kind whatsoever. In short, the young aged with harrowing rapidity, gaining experience but losing contact with every reason why that experience was valuable.

Today one senses the emergence of still another younger generation. It is apparently not nearly so self-conscious as was that to which Mr. Brooks directed his essays. It is marked by a certain striking and refreshing naiveté, unavoidable after the reign of disillusioned maturity through which the nation has lived. The one thing anybody knows about it is that it exists. Which way will it elect to go? One has a fancy that the older "personalist" approach to life, the esthetic inlay of which was so pronounced, will no longer be entirely viable. The world is not likely to find its way back to the integral personality until it has been tried in running harsh gauntlets which, so far as one can see, lie just ahead. It is only at the end of both necessity and passion that the life of reason is permissible.

"There are," writes Mr. Brooks, "no vital relationships that are not reciprocal, and only in the measure that we undergo a cognate experience ourselves can we share in the experience of others. To the Catholic, Dante, to the aristocrat, Nietzsche, to the democrat, Whitman, inevitably mean more than any of them can mean to the scholar who merely receives them all through his intellect without the palpitant response of conviction and sympathetic experience." Well, these sentences belong to America. They are part and parcel of the best to which a man or woman inured to this country and interested in its civilization can look back when seeking for the guidance which it is the business of criticism to supply. The generation which they helped to express may have been baffled and defeated. At least it has left evidence to prove, immortally, that it was alive. Will the youth now on the threshold do as much?

Fisherman's Daughter

She liked to skip along the water's edge,
To gather shells and strangely treasured things,
To smell the ocean, hear along the sedge
The chanteys of the breeze. The lazy wings
Of gulls delighted her. She always found
Those tragic places where the falling tide
Had caught a minnow. She would watch the ground
For soldier crabs to come with cautious stride
And shuffle out across their settlement
Of tiny holes, and she would laugh to see
Them scamper back again. And so she spent
The hours in simple, summer revelry.
A mermaid, caught in nets and brought ashore,
Would not have known as much of ocean lore.

GERTRUDE RYDER BENNETT.

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ALUMNI—SOCIETY OR CLASS?

By FRANCIS X. FITZGIBBON

IT MIGHT be best for me to define my terms before I begin to analyze the concept "alumni" and assign it to its proper place. By a society one means a group of rational beings bound together in a corporate body for the attainment of some end. Ordinarily, one joins a society and does not find oneself in it by chance. A class is different. Classes are formed without the active co-operation of the members. Circumstances are the principal factors in the shaping of classes.

The alumni societies in our Catholic colleges and universities are in a deplorable condition if one can judge by the appeals that are made to the graduate student body. The individual members do not seem to be following the leaders and turn deaf ears to their cries to be active members. These leaders have turned envious eyes toward the University Clubs, the Harvard Clubs, the Yale Clubs and others of a like nature which bear the names of the institutions to which they are attached and they wonder why they cannot interest the Catholic college graduate in his society that it might blossom forth on an equal footing.

The purpose of the Catholic alumni society at the present moment is nothing more than social. One arrives at that conviction when the mails have no other news to offer from one's alma mater than notices of banquets, smokers, field days and athletic dinners. If that be the only reason for its existence, then it is not a society but a social agency.

Many of the members have a very peculiar attitude. They are not motivated by any desire to improve the organization. Their interest is totally a personal one and alumni groups have suffered at the hands of this distinct class whose only motto is, "Join everything and become known. The alumni is a modest beginning and when the clubs become too numerous, it is soon dropped.

I have not the least doubt but that those who direct the destinies of the alumni of the colleges and the universities console themselves with the thought that here is one more instance of the inability of Catholics to organize in times outside of persecution. Knowing that such consolation is nothing more than justification for lack of success, would it not be wise to go over the whole ground of alumni organizations and ask the pointed questions: What is the association's purpose? What is it there for? What is it aiming at?

In some things we Catholics have no superiors. We are the best imitators the world has to offer, individually and collectively. Club life is the goal of non-Catholic graduate groups and, therefore, it should be ours. Never a question about the finances that such a project requires nor the individual income necessary to keep one a member in good standing. Never a question about the Catholic background that would make him interest himself in social life of this nature. All this is taken for granted.

Social affairs are only secondary and means to an end but they have been made ends in themselves. A bit of paganism lurks in the background both in theory and in fact. In the pre-repeal era, at least among the male organizations the atmosphere was distinctly "Romanesque" in its wild abandon. The few speakers that were invited to talk on problems of the day might as well have stayed home, for the majority were unable to hear and saw to it that no one else heard.

Perhaps the problem is more fundamental than this. There might exist the belief that the Catholic student is liberated from college as one is liberated from prison; that the degree marks the end of education and the pursuit of learning is no more. If the recipient of a degree retains such an attitude, the degree is nothing more than a meaningless label and the alumni becomes a class into which one glides automatically and unconsciously. All of which brings me to the answer of this question, that for such organizations the title society is entirely inappropriate, while class would be more descriptive.

Well, if these are secondary concerns, what are the primary? The most dominant note of an alumni should be one of beneficent utility. To the individual members, such a society should offer them opportunities of continuing the intellectual pursuits that were cut short at the time of graduation. Why not turn alumni week into a week of intellectual activity rather than one of physical endurance? The thought is captivating. To go back again through a day's routine of classes, to listen in on lectures by professors, to see what advances have been made in science since one left college, could a more interesting program be offered? Definite courses on social problems and problems that concern the professions could be instituted, to be held at regular intervals with an eye to interesting those members of the graduate body who find it impossible to attend a graduate school. In short, make it definitely a society for intellectual advancement.

To the college itself, such a society would be a strong ally in its advancement, one that would take more interest in the administration than in the athletics. It would work hand in hand with the faculty to provide a contact with the business world.

To the present student body it would become an aid in an advisory capacity. Members of the professions would return to give an instructive talk on their callings, to inform the students of the possibilities in such a line, to explain the requirements and, if possible, offer opinions to the individual about his chances in such a profession.

As a final hint, it should not be taken for granted that everyone who was once associated with the institution deserves membership. Accept members only through application because two things will be accomplished thereby. Firstly, there will be a mobilization of individuals who will be active; and, secondly, the Post Office will no longer be enriched through the mailing of letters and cards that find a resting place in a waste-basket after a hasty perusal.

Then we will have a response from the graduates that will be 100 percent? Not at all. We still must discount the disgruntled who will never return and the ones who find it impossible to return. At least there will be a representative gathering and the worthy consolation of realizing that in this problem we tried to be original.

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SEVEN DAYS' SURVEY

The Church.—On Christmas, 1931, Cardinal Verdier, Archbishop of Paris, announced a program of church construction for the district of Paris. At the end of 1933, sixty church buildings had been started and thirty-one of them completed. Fifteen more are now being planned, and it is hoped that 100 will be built during the present campaign. * * * In the Archdiocese of Chicago, during the eighteen years that Cardinal Mundelein has been Archbishop, 600 church buildings have been erected and 87 new parishes established. * * * Statistics recently published show the First Order of St. Francis, including its three branches, to be the Church's largest religious order for men. In 3,173 friaries situated all over the world there are 37,125 Franciscan Friars. Of these, 4,865 are missionaries. * * * The Archbishop of Utrecht has opened the first "Museum of New Religious Art" in the world. All but four of the eighty-two artists represented are now alive. Works in the museum will be constantly replaced to keep the collection altogether contemporary. * * * "Catholic stamps" are interesting a growing number of philatelists all over the world. Since 1900 over 1,100 have been issued, and during 1933 alone twenty-seven countries printed stamps of particular Catholic subjects. Among these countries are the Vatican State, Italy, Belgium, Ireland, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, Germany and the Philippine Islands. * * * In Ballclub, Minnesota, approximately 800 Chippewa Indians, living in teepees and reciting their prayers in their own language, attended the annual Catholic Indian Congress of the Minnesota Chippewas. Forty-three Indians received their First Communion during the congress. * * * In Los Angeles the Maryknoll Mission for Japanese, which maintains a home for Japanese children and a school with 400 Japanese students, recently received a gift of 2,000 yen from the Emperor of Japan. * * * The Reverend John F. O'Hara was elected twelfth president of the University of Notre Dame by the Provincial Council of the Congregation of the Holy Cross. Since the death of Father Charles L. O'Donnell he has served as acting president.

The Nation.—Three days after Republican orators at the celebration of the eightieth birthday of the party had deplored the vast force "lodged in the hands of a military martinet," General Johnson met this campaign issue by writing a letter to President Roosevelt indicating that he would be glad to return to private life and recommending that his one-man control of the National Recovery Administration be vested in a commission. * * * Republican Senate leaders requested a cessation by the Republican National Committee of wholesale opposition to the New Deal, as congressional records would show that they favored many of its provisions. They urged Republicans to adopt a "Three R" campaign: revision of the A.A.A., restoration of the anti-trust laws and reduction of federal expenditures. * * * Drys in Mississippi decisively defeated a proposal to repeal the state's quarter-century-old prohibition laws and substitute a state-controlled liquor store system. * * * In a special election in North Carolina to fill the unexpired term of the late Representative Edward W. Pou, the Democratic nominee, Harold D. Cooley, defeated the Republican candidate, Hobart Brantley, by approximately 15 to 1. Democrats hailed this as a significant straw in regard to coming elections. * * * At the celebration of the first anniversary of the Geneva convention restricting the manufacture of narcotics, special praise was given Turkey for curtailing production for illicit trade in spite of appreciable economic losses. * * * United States Steel Corporation announced that shipments for June were the highest since May, 1930, and for the first quarter of this year, the highest since 1931. Remington Rand announced domestic sales for the quarter had gained 49 percent over last year and foreign sales 40 percent. United Fruit Company reported profits before payment of federal taxes for the first six months of this year were $6,317,000, compared to $5,073,000 in the first six months last year. Sailings from the port of New York last month increased 7 percent over a year ago—the first increase for the key month of June reported in six years.

The Wide World.—M. Louis Barthou conferred in London with representatives of His Majesty's government. It is rumored that the British assented in theory to military cooperation in case France were attacked. * * * The German "purging" led inevitably to a number of speeches. Herr Hess, personal representative of *Der Fuehrer,* reaffirmed the attachment of the Third Reich to peace, but added that in case of invasion the people would rise as one man to repel the enemy. This address was variously interpreted as an endeavor to smooth over the references to a "foreign plot" made on June 30 and as an appeal to German patriotism. Dr. Goebbels threatened newspapermen in Germany with suppression if they continued to spread "false views" of the country—views calculated to prevent normal relations between European states. Chancellor Hitler ordered the Reichstag to convene on July 13, and it is expected that he will then offer a version of the bloody events. Rumors of further killings and disorders continued to appear in the press, but there was nothing of major consequence to report. German economic conditions did not improve, a potato shortage making it necessary to import "spuds" from abroad. A newly devised system for allotting exchange had, it is true, halted the drain of gold from the Reichsbank. * * * Dispatches indicated that the Russian government was planning to inaugurate an "extensive naval building program," with an eye toward defense of the Pacific coast line. The government hinted at its willingness to attend coming naval disarmament conferences, if invited, and at its belief that in view of prevailing scares no such con-

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ference might be convened in 1935. Elsewhere in Europe there were expressions of alarm concerning naval plans tentatively announced by Italy. These plans, if carried out, would drive France into further battleship construction.

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Strikes.—The climax of the longshoremen's strike which started May 9 came July 5 on the Embarcadero of San Francisco, the city's water front. Three men were killed and 105 injured; and the National Guard was ordered in for the first time since the great fire. After the riots, a truce was called so that union men could arrange a general strike and the Labor Disputes Board under Archbishop Hanna could hold hearings and attempt to work out a solution. The International Longshoremen's Union, which represents the backbone of the strike, claimed to be willing to arbitrate wages and conditions, but demanded absolute control over the "hiring halls," which are employment centers dominated by the employers. The longshoremen claimed they were hampered in reaching an agreement by an unwanted tie-up with other marine unions, the Communist Party, and the stubborn dominance of the Industrial Association of San Francisco and the Manufacturers' Association of Los Angeles over the employers' committee with whom they were negotiating. Control of the hiring halls afterward became the clear issue, and the employers claimed the right of joint control, allowing the union to supervise them. The character of the halls is practically unknown to the public, and attacked severely by the union. A general strike of 100,000 union men in Portland, Oakland and San Francisco was threatened if the controversy continued. Meanwhile a violent and rare farm strike involving a nascent cannery workers' union was temporarily adjusted on July 10, leaving solution to future arbitration and July 11 was set as dead line in Minneapolis for clearing up the chronic dispute there between the truck drivers and their employers. A sympathetic strike of 40,000 men was threatened in the Twin Cities.

Pegging the Dollar.—Where is the dollar—and what? London dispatches indicated that Mr. George L. Harrison, governor of the Federal Reserve Bank in New York, informed certain British monetary authorities that the dollar was stabilized and that further attacks upon its integrity would not be undertaken by the President excepting as a "defensive measure." The answer given by spokesmen for the Royal Exchequer was, so it is said, that the hour for making the pound stay put had not yet arrived. These rumors were sufficient to alarm Senator Elmer Thomas, of Oklahoma, who cabled Mr. Harrison a threat to the effect that Congress was watching and would resort to an inquiry if anything anti-inflationary occurred as a result of the reported unofficial London conferences. The Senator's cablegram was pretty long. During the course of it the inflationary position was outlined in several hundred words. The nation, it was said, still suffered as a result of what Mr. Harrison and his ilk had done to bring about deflation during the Hoover régime. "Commodity gold exchanges now for 150 percent more of other basic commodities than in 1926," wrote the Senator, pointing out that "our farmers and other basic producers are compelled to give of labor and products one and one-half times as much as in 1926 to pay increased taxes and unreduced freight, interest and debt charges." Only the "international bankers" would have anything to gain from stabilization at the present time, it was alleged. As a consequence of the Senator's action, many observers were predicting a renewed drive for inflation when Congress assembles again.

Timothy Walsh.—The death of Timothy Walsh, of the architectural firm of Maginnis and Walsh, marked the ending of one of the most distinguished careers in ecclesiastical architecture in this country. Bishop James Anthony Walsh, Superior General of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America at Maryknoll, New York, was at the bedside of his brother when he died. Mr. Walsh was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1868, and after preparatory studies in Boston continued his professional education in Europe for some years. Returning to Boston, he became a member of the old and highly respected firm of Peabody and Stearns. In 1898 he and Mr. Charles D. Maginnis became associated as partners. Some of the most widely known works executed by their firm are the buildings of Boston College, the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at the Catholic University in Washington, the Convent of the Maryknoll Sisters, the buildings of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society and Maryknoll Seminary, Nazareth Seminary at St. Paul, the episcopal residence of Cardinal O'Connell in Boston, the chapels at Trinity College and Georgetown Preparatory School and dormitories at Notre Dame University and Holy Cross College, the new rectory of the Paulist Fathers in New York and the Regis High School in the same city. Mr. Walsh was a fellow of the American Institute of Architects, a member of the Boston Society of Architects and one of the earliest corporate members of the Liturgical Arts Society of which his partner, Mr. Maginnis, is the president.

Are the Churches Really Losing?—That the Christian religion, all forms included, is making real progress despite obstacles and statements to the contrary is asserted in an article published by the Reverend George L. Kieffer in the July *Homiletic Review*. Dr. Kieffer is an expert statistician. Census reports indicated that the total church membership in the United States was larger by more than 1,500,000 at the close of 1933 than it was at the close of 1931, and that the percentage has also risen from 47.70 in 1931 to 48.37 in 1933. The ratio of growth seems to have been fairly uniform, though the largest increase in registered membership during the past year was shown by the Evangelical Churches. Even from the economic point of view the situation is by no means as bad as has sometimes been supposed. An article by Mr. A. C. Marts, in the *Christian Century* of February 21, 1934, holds that while the national income went down 54 percent between 1929 and 1932, the total contributions made by living members of the churches declined only 40

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percent. Of course this represents a very serious loss, but it is worth noting that in the same period expenditures for recreation were 72 percent less at the close of the same period. Nevertheless the fact remains that by comparison with Canada, where only 16,042 persons reported "no religious affiliation" when the census man came around, the United States is a very heathenish country, indeed. It has less than ten times as many Christians of all denominations as has India.

Cardinal Faulhaber's Sermons.—Rumored under arrest, Cardinal Faulhaber appeared in Bamberg on schedule and delivered a rousing address. Great interest has been awakened here by the appearance, under the title of "Judaism, Christianity and Germany," of the English version of those famous Advent sermons which His Eminence delivered in Munich last year (New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.50). Essentially it is a little volume of solid Catholic doctrine on the subject of the fundamental spiritual traditions of the Church, which nationalism seeks to revamp in accordance with its own special ideology. The Rabbi Stephen S. Wise expressed his hearty approval: "I am eager to do what I can to bring to the notice of the largest number of men and women in and out of my own fellowship the knowledge of this noble book, which is honoring to the author, to his Church and, indeed, to the Germany that shall yet cease to be Nazi." Prominent Catholic and Protestant divines were similarly impressed. One declared that he considered the book "potentially a valuable document for the missionary work of the Church in the United States." Even the public seemed interested, and despite the prevailing dulness in the book-market plenty of copies were making their way across the counters.

Poll on the President.—The *Literary Digest* poll on "the acts and policies of Roosevelt's first year" showed a total of 1,772,163 votes. These polls have in the past been proved the most reliable straw votes available on national issues or election trends. The poll on the presidential election in 1932 was, for instance, 98.65 percent accurate in forecasting Roosevelt's popular vote. In the present poll, 1,083,752 Americans voted their approval of the President's acts and policies, while 688,411 registered disapproval. Vermont stood alone with a majority of disapprovals, the other 47 states of the union voting "Yes." The total vote showed a 61.15 percent ratio of approval. This is a gain of 3.83 percent over the proportions of the popular vote in the Roosevelt landslide in 1932 which not only swept him into power but also carried the Democrats into power in both houses of Congress by wide margins. In six special polls conducted by the *Literary Digest,* bankers with a 47.59 percent minority ratio of approval alone failed to support the President. The other groups voting in the affirmative and the proportions voting "Yes" were: business men, 56.23 percent; clergy, 54.36 percent; educators, 67.20 percent; lawyers, 53.19 percent; and physicians, 56.83. Polls conducted for the *Literary Digest* by seventeen college newspapers gave a 64.35 percent advantage to the "Ayes." Only 183,782 person who voted for Roosevelt in 1932 now voted "No" on his acts and policies, while 237,452 who voted for Hoover in 1932, now favor President Roosevelt after his first year in office. In summary, the President received a vote of confidence from more than 3 out of 5 voters, and the trend indicates that his popularity is even increasing since his record-breaking victory in 1932.

* * * *

Internal Revenue.—The United States government's internal revenue receipts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1934, totaled $2,672,318,602.24, an increase of $1,052,479,378.24 over last year. Five states, New York, North Carolina (with tobacco), Illinois, Pennsylvania and California, contributed more than half the total; and eleven states, Arizona, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, Wyoming, Arkansas, Mississippi, Nevada, Utah and Montana, less than 1 percent. New York paid in the most: $564,321,808; and Wyoming the least: $1,170,330. Every state increased its miscellaneous collections this year, some over 300 percent, and all but six collected more from income taxes. Total miscellaneous revenue rose from $873,047,820 to $1,483,789,755, and income tax receipts from $746,791,494 to $817,303,457. A new item on the balance sheet this year is the $371,225,386 raised by the Agricultural Adjustment Tax. The income tax revenue is divided into the $397,737,681.35 collected from corporations, and the $419,563,776.41 from individuals. It is notable that income taxes lagged $666,486,298 behind miscellaneous revenues. Total expenditures for the year were $7,105,050,084 compared with $5,142,953,626 for the year ending June 30, 1933.

Electric Magic.—In Pittsfield, Massachusetts, the General Electric Company, studying the means for protecting electrical equipment from lightning, created in its laboratory an electric current exceeding any direct stroke of natural lightning. Accompanied by a terrific crash of thunder, about 250,000 amperes were discharged at a pressure of 150,000 volts in eight one-millionths of a second, and more than 30,000,000 kilowatts were represented in a single discharge. A copper wire a tenth of an inch in diameter was vaporized during the instantaneous discharge, a similar iron wire exploded, reinforced concrete was shattered, a silver plated spoon vanished in sparks. In New York City on July 10, his seventy-eighth birthday, Nikola Tesla, father of modern electrical generation and transmission and a precursor of Marconi, announced new inventions of a miraculous nature far surpassing the 700 he has already made. It is a "death beam" to be produced by four inventions each requiring stationary power plants. The first Mr. Tesla says will produce rays of energy in free air without the use of high vacuum, the second, "very great electrical force," the third will amplify the work of the second, and the fourth will produce a "tremendous electrical repelling force." The beam could surround a country like an invisible Chinese wall, making it completely impregnable against any attack at all.

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THE SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Of Human Bondage

HOLLYWOOD has succeeded in making a very interesting picture of Somerset Maugham's story, "Of Human Bondage." It is not entirely a pleasant story since it attempts to describe how a young medical student, afflicted with a crippled foot, takes out his sense of physical inferiority by falling hopelessly in love with a Cockney waitress. At times the story carries the theme almost to the point of incredibility. Nevertheless, it is sincerely told with a surprising amount of artistic restraint.

Philip Carey, as we first see him, is an art student in Paris. An inward misgiving of his own leads him to ask the advice of his teacher. He receives the frank verdict that his talent does not rise above mediocrity and that unless he wishes to play with art for the rest of his life as a mere amusement, he had better find something for which he is more completely fitted. It seems that Carey's father was a prominent physician and this leads him to the decision to study medicine in spite of his very limited financial resources.

It is rather fortunate for the effect of the screen story that Leslie Howard has been chosen for the part of Philip Carey. He is ideally suited for any peculiarly sensitive rôle and manages to convey from the very earliest scenes the unfortunate mental effect upon Philip of his physical infirmity. There is an unforgettable scene in the hospital, for example, when, for the benefit of the other medical students, the chief surgeon asks him to show them his club foot. He does so but at infinite cost to his sense of shame. It is in this mood that he starts a casual conversation with a young Cockney waitress named Mildred, and suddenly begins to idealize her. He has the feeling that most women despise him because of his infirmity, and he does not realize that in seeking the companionship of the waitress he is merely giving in to a sense of general defeat in life. Mildred is played in an inimitably effective manner by Bette Davis. She treats Philip abominably. But he still persists with every honorable intention and finally gets up sufficient courage to ask her to marry him, only to discover that he is too late because she has already decided to marry another man who has been very free with his attentions to her. In his loneliness Philip finds a woman novelist whose maternal instinct seeks to protect him. But just as he is beginning to adjust himself, Mildred comes back into his life. It seems that she was lying to him when she said that she was to marry the other man. He has now thrown her over upon discovering that she is to have a child. In all gallantry, Philip arranges to take care of her but only through a sense of curious obligation arising from his past feeling toward her. He no longer wants to marry her nor to have anything to do with her, but his sense of chivalry is too deep to let her suffer unnecessarily. Time after time she shows herself wholly unworthy of his high-minded friendship by flirting outrageously with other medical students, and by exhibiting a ferocious jealousy toward anything in which Philip is interested. She is obviously hurt that he no longer wants to marry her but she realizes her strange hold over him and uses it as a means of torturing him mentally. At last, in a fit of jealous anger, she cuts to pieces all the paintings which Philip had been keeping as souvenirs of his days in Paris, burns up the bonds which his uncle had given him to finish his medical course, and calls him to his face nothing but a miserable cripple.

Left without further financial resources, Carey resigns from the hospital but at the instance of a head surgeon submits to an operation on his foot, which turns out successfully. Thus, for the first time, he is relieved of the physical handicap which has carried itself out so tragically in his mental life. An elderly Englishman from Yorkshire who was a patient in the hospital under Philip's care, offers him the temporary hospitality of his country home, and there Philip finds, at last, in this man's daughter the person he needs to round out his sadly distorted life. But the past still has a strange and suffocating hold upon him. He cannot rid himself of his mental attachment to the unfortunate Mildred. It is not until she dies in the hospital from tuberculosis, as the last stage in her downward career, that the pressure of this "human bondage" seems to be lifted from his soul.

Philip completes his medical course with the help of a small inheritance left him by his uncle, and at last feels free, mentally and spiritually, to marry the daughter of his Yorkshire host. It is very difficult to convey in a mere outline of a story the sensitive inner play of emotion which this film so admirably portrays. In fact, the weakness of the picture, itself, comes from the attempt to do something which the screen is not completely suited for. In a novel or in the intimacy of the theatre, the recurrent appearances of Mildred in Philip's life would seem more natural and believable. In the screen story, with its limited amount of dialogue, her reappearances seem almost too abrupt and too brutal in their effect upon Philip. He is, after all, a sort of modern Hamlet unable to disentangle himself from strong psychological chains. The theme, itself, is all the more interesting because of the fact that he is not bound to Mildred by the ordinary ties of physical passion. In this sense he is an ascetic and an idealist very far removed from the ordinary plots and stories of modern fiction. Yet it is quite interesting to observe that the public reaction to this unusual type of story is distinctly favorable. Philip's mentality is hardly of the kind which would be easily understood by the average movie audience. Yet, thanks, partly to the great sincerity with which the story is told, and partly to the extraordinarily fine acting of both Leslie Howard and Bette Davis, the story seems to hold the intense interest of the audience at every moment. The only way one can account for this is to recognize that a large part of the world is suffering in the innermost resources of its mind from the same type of conflict as Philip Carey's. Few people may suffer from an objective physical handicap such as his, but who can say how many people harbor in their hearts a sense of deficiency before the brutal onslaught of the world as it is organized today?

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COMMUNICATIONS

THE LEGION OF DECENCY

Detroit, Mich.

TO the Editor: Your pointed editorial relative to the need of a National Previewing Board for motion pictures is to be commended. That such a board be established in Hollywood is decidedly necessary to eliminate confusion. It will make for concerted action without which the Legion of Decency will be doomed to the status of merely having been a good attempt.

Quick to pick flaws, some of our secular periodicals have already pointed out where the Legion limps. *Time* magazine (June 11, 1934) curtly comments: "The Legion of Decency provides no official guide to good and bad films. But individual priests and bishops may blacklist as they please." Granted that the statement is not quite exact, nevertheless it strikes at what may be the "Achilles's heel" of a much needed movement for reform.

A National Previewing Board in Hollywood will eliminate the incongruity of adjacent dioceses differing in motion picture recommendations. It will provide reviews which will not be made useless in many cities because the films have already been shown. Such a board will also eliminate the confusion of conflicting judgment as to what constitutes the goodness or badness of a film—lack of uniformity on this point would be a boon to producers who could then wail, "They don't know what they want, so how can we be expected to know!"

Granted that this National Previewing Board is established, there arises the question of distribution of the lists recommending or blacklisting films. To do so merely through Catholic periodicals and diocesan newspapers will mean that many of our people will not see these reviews. Perhaps some method could be devised whereby individual parishes could subscribe directly to the National Board for this service, or through the local diocesan paper should there be such a publication. Forearmed with this list each parish would then be assured of knowing, in advance, the caliber of the films being presented in the larger downtown theatres (in the cities) and also in the immediate neighborhood.

Judging from the genuine enthusiasm of our Catholic people on this important matter, it is imperative that they be given competent and permanent guidance in their selection of motion picture entertainment.

REV. FRANCIS J. FLYNN.

Bayside West, L. I., N. Y.

TO the Editor: In relation to the Black List on immoral moving pictures, I suggest that we all contribute a certain sum to be spent each week in the daily papers—listing, as they appear, the pictures and plays on the disapproved list. The list can be added to from time to time. If it is printed in agate line, or the smallest size type, it would not be so expensive. Do not depend on just the religious press but specify just what position it must occupy in the daily press. If every parish were taxed $3 a week, and then the advertisement run in all morning papers on a certain day each day, preferably Friday or Saturday, on the second or third page at the top, we would get action soon. Try to find Soviet or Nazi news at the bottom of the twenty-fifth page or thereabouts. We Catholics have a news sense also.

If this would not be feasible, then attach a small yellow sticker to all religious publications with the names of all immoral pictures and plays printed thereon, and as it would be on the first page it would be readily removable and placed in one's pocket or purse. It is terrifying to see names in print under the heading, "Black List." Do not bother with a White List at all.

ANNE C. HERRMAN.

Seattle, Wash.

TO the Editor: Please accept congratulations and my expression of appreciation for your editorial of May 18 on "The Legion of Decency." I am surely glad to know that THE COMMONWEAL has at last recognized a moving-picture menace.

I also enjoyed your article on "A Planned Theatre" in the same issue, in which some attention was also given to the "Hollywood product."

I surely welcome these first articles on the movies and trust they will not be the last.

M. A. DALY.

Mobile, Ala.

TO the Editor: I, too, would like to get a similar explanation to that requested by Katherine Burton with relation to movies. For example, *Time* depicts "Tarzan and His Mate" as an indecent orgy; while your Mr. Skinner ridicules and pokes fun at it.

I clipped the *Time's* review and your comment, sent them to my pastor for reconciliation, but of course there was no light he could throw on the matter. Where are we going to get authentic information on plays and movies?

J. J. MCMAHON.

ON PACIFISM

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: The next war will probably be started by simple-minded pacifists. I wish the whole yelping herd could be muzzled for a year—we might then be able to make some progress in the direction of a lasting peace. The newest pacifist slogan seems to be: "Abolish war by lynching all munitions makers." How absurd! I am curious to know why America is being so debonairly beaten with the pacifist stick and why so many seemingly intelligent people are engaged in carrying coals to Newcastle. We have good reason to believe in adequate preparedness; and in this scheme of things our American munitions makers (poor fellows!) play a part. Inadequate armament must be paid for, should war occur, in the lives of American youth. If I should one day be called upon to fight—this is a mere personal idiosyncrasy—I should very much prefer to have in my hand a gun rather than a pacifist tract.

JOHN J. O'CONNOR.

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BOOKS

The Munitions Men

Iron, Blood and Profits, by George Seldes. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

ONE OF the most encouraging signs of the accelerated pace of the peace movement in the United States is a deepening interest in the "preparedness" propaganda poured forth by those corporations and interlocking directorates whose dividends depend on wars and rumors of war. "The Secret International" published by the Union for Democratic Control, and, more recently, "Merchants of Death," by H. C. Engelbrecht and F. C. Hanighen, have focused attention upon those "uncontrolled activities of the manufacturers and merchants of engines of destruction," which President Roosevelt has described as a "grave menace to the peace of the world."

George Seldes, author of "You Can't Print That" and of "The Vatican, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," had his curiosity piqued on this subject when, as a war correspondent in 1918, he heard why the Allied air service had been forbidden to bombard the Lorraine iron and steel mines and smelters. The French and German munition makers, engaged in a lucrative arms traffic *via* neutral countries, were powerful enough to protract the conflict by furnishing political protection to the Basin of Briey. Similarly, Vickers had supplied the Turkish artillery with the shells which decimated the ranks of the plucky Anzacs who stormed up the slopes of Gallipoli. Although "gold has no odor and steel has no *patria,* the industry-patriots, war-profiteers and armament-salesmen, all *agents provocateurs* of international strife, could contentedly chant: 'Where money is, there is our Fatherland.' "

Describing the munitions lobby in Washington, Mr. Seldes testifies: "At the moment of reading proof the writer has received confirmation of the charge that motivating influence behind the Vinson big navy bill came from the munitions makers." It was this legislation that, in an era of deflation and bankruptcies canonized the vicious "plus 10 percent" as a reasonable margin of profit for the war contractors. In this connection, the comment of Senator Borah was apt as well as caustic: "The armaments manufacturers make their 20 to 30 percent profit while honest and decent business is struggling with bankruptcy, and schools and colleges are closed for want of money." There is ample documentary evidence in the chapters on "The Profits in War-making" (American and European) to fortify the statement of Senator Vandenberg, apropos of "Death Dividends": "Commercial motive is public enemy No. 1 in the peace equation."

In "Dictators, Dollars and Guns" the reader will find the best published account of the network of industrial, political and financial interests which subsidized Adolph Hitler in the "March on Berlin." Naturally, the same interests are eager to perpetuate the state of nervous tension and alarm now prevalent in Central Europe. Nor is it surprising to discover that gentlemen having armaments for sale have been the leading financial supporters

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of many of the so-called patriotic societies in all the armed countries of the world. The author quotes with approval the rhetorical question of former Representative Clyde H. Tavenner: "Is it not a rather peculiar coincidence that among those nineteen patriots who stepped forth from all the millions of American citizens to save the republic by advocating larger appropriations for battleships, every armor-making concern in the United States should be represented?" He adds that the navy leagues of the various powers cooperate with one another and that the armament interests secure "large memberships of sincere, patriotic men and women and many of the most prominent citizens roped in through false pretence."

Apart from a few scattered references to the papal exhortation to peace, one would conclude from this book that protest against the war-profiteers is the exclusive prerogative of Socialists, Communists and feminine peace organizations. It indicates how extensively radical groups have been permitted to appear as the sole friends of disarmament and world order. Those who wish to follow the investigation of the Nye Senatorial Committee into the munitions industry in this country will find excellent background material in "Iron, Blood and Profits."

JOSEPH FRANCIS THORNING.

The Gay King

Old Rowley; The Private Life of Charles II, by Dennis Wheatley. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.75.

WHEN England had begun to recover in the seventeenth century from the woeful Puritanism that Cromwell had thrust upon her she decided to learn to laugh gloriously and work abundantly under the leadership of Charles II, the king whom she recalled from exile to the throne of his father. Dennis Wheatley, a novelist, finds in this political revulsion the main theme for "Old Rowley," which he documents as "The Private Life of Charles II." It goes further, however, and is the actual account of an era.

"Old Rowley" is the nickname that his own period established for the King "who never said a foolish thing, and never did a wise one," the name coming from a famous stallion which the King loved to ride and whose points he was wont to glorify. Before the end came to his father, Charles I, Old Rowley was forced into exile while still a lad. The ensuing years seem to have had scant effect on the life of the very young man. His first letter from his mother read: "Charles, I am sore that I must begin my first letter with chiding you because I heere that you will not take your phisick." It might have been any mother at any time writing advice to her boy. We have, however, the assurance of the author and of history that the Cavalier King, Charles II, was one of the most-traveled and best-informed rulers of his generation. Prosperity arrived in England with his coming to his birthright, gay days and gayer nights were the rule in every walk of life, and if the King was the leader in the gaiety of the nation he possessed many of the leading qualities that make the Englishman of today as well as

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his progenerator of the seventeenth century very well satisfied with himself.

Among the companions and friends that surrounded Charles was Izaak Walton, the contemplative fisherman, and other men wise in the lore of the farm and forest, the stream and the dell. While it is true that the King loved many women, it is surprising to realize his poignant fear that his Queen should suffer after his death. The book is well written, ably illustrated by Frank C. Papé, and contains a complete index and key.

EDWARD J. BREEN.

A Proper Realist

The Road Leads On, by Knut Hamsun. New York: Coward-McCann. $3.00.

BARRING death, violent accident, serious disease, flood, fire or blow-down, a year is made for Knut Hamsun admirers in which one of his major works is published. In the United States we are a fairly select small crew. There was a mild hump in the graph of the number of his readers here at the time of his receiving the Nobel Prize and the publication of "Growth of the Soil." But those who have read him right along, beginning with "Hunger," "Mysteries," "Pan," "Victoria," "A Wanderer Plays on Muted Strings" and "Dreamers," his early, highly subjective books, and in some ways, his most lyrical and most amusing, through the magnificently objective "Growth of the Soil," "Rosa," "Benoni," "The Women at the Pump," "Segelfoss Town" and the rest, down to his last great trilogy, "Vagabonds," "August" and "The Road Leads On," are, I have been reliably informed, not many. That is too bad for the many. They are certainly missing one of the grandest treats that reading can provide. I cannot assure them that they will be always edified, as Hamsun surveys the whole social scene, the bums and bad ones, as well as the good ones. He better than anyone I know, deserves the title of realist by reason of seeing reality whole. I regret that he does not know the spiritual man or woman; that is the one flaw in his universality of vision, and a grievous one. But for natural men and women laboring along, suffering, loving, laughing, starving and conquering in their own small circle of invincible ignorance and familiarity with the things of their own lives, there has been no more penetrating recorder.

As "Growth of the Soil" was a great saga of the man of the soil, the present trilogy about August is a great saga of the man of business. In the small, isolated communities that are the scenes of Hamsun's stories, the logical effects of character, both on the individual and on the community, can work themselves out with exceptional clearness. Essentials commonly blurred by multiplicity in our modern world, are revealed—not inhumanly, not coldly or critically, but warmly, humorously, with fine human kindness. To anyone who has read "Vagabonds" and "August" the mere announcement of this sequel, "The Road Leads On," will be enough, and to others we can only wish the good luck of their having a chance to begin at the beginning of the story.

FREDERIC THOMPSON.

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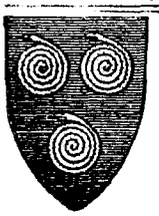
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Briefer Mention

The Rise of the Celts, by Henri Hubert. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $5.00.

THIS volume is first of all a memorial to its brilliant author who died before it was finished and whose entire professional life was devoted to the complex but fascinating subject with which it deals. Professor Hubert was above all a student of linguistics, so that it is not surprising he should have seen in Celtic speech the best of all clues to the identity of a race which, now seemingly identified with Ireland and Wales, left an enduring mark on practically the whole of central Europe. The names of German towns in number still offer testimony to the presence of the race. Theories to the effect that the Celt was a definite racial type are disputed. Perhaps the most interesting chapter deals with the archeological evidence regarding the civilization of the Celts, especial attention being given the remains of the La Téne epoch. The volume carries the discussion of origins as far as the Hallstatt period. Beyond any question this treatise (though it is something of a torso) is the most satisfactory book of the kind to have appeared thus far. It may be said to exemplify the best qualities of what is often termed vulgarization, but is also scrupulously careful and judicious. Unfortunately not all errors of detail, attributable to the untimely death of the author, have been corrected. These are not, however, of major consequence.

Woman of Spain, by Scott O'Dell. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.00.

THE SCENE of Scott O'Dell's novel is old California and his heroine, Marta, a woman of the Spanish peasant class. Marta was a worker who believed in production and the receipt of proper financial return for hides and tallow. She resented the fact that her male compatriots slept away the glorious hours of languid days while work was to be done and profit achieved. There was no romance to her in such shiftlessness. Jared Wyeth, the fair-haired Yankee mate of the ship China Bride, exemplified to her all things good, and their romance forms the story, which seethes with a spirit of honest labor against a background of indolence. The story is well told and the book well worth reading.

CONTRIBUTORS

JAMES J. WALSH, M.D., writer and lecturer, is the author of many books, among them "The Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries."

AUGUSTUS CLARE is the pen-name of a contemporary poet.

JOHN MARION EGAN sends this article from Wisconsin.

RAYMOND LARSSON, a Wisconsin poet, is the author of many lyrics.

GERTRUDE RYDER BENNETT contributes verse to current periodicals.

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